



NEWSLETTER

No 7

From the Rector....

September has been an extremely busy month for the school. While it is very important for us to be forward looking, staff have also been reflecting on pupil attainment in national exams to see what further advice we can offer pupils to ensure that everyone has the best possible chance of success this year.

On Friday, 18th September the school received a visit from a group of Norwegian educationalists as part of a trip to Scotland to look at ways in which our Government inspects schools. I am pleased to report that our visitors were delighted by their welcome and very impressed by our pupils.

The all weather pitch will be opened by Douglas Campbell, former Rector, on the afternoon of Friday, 25th September. It is entirely appropriate that Mr Campbell is Guest of Honour as he was highly influential in securing the pitch for the school.

It is a first class facility and will enhance our programme of Physical Education. Members of the Parent Council have been invited to the opening and will be given a tour of the school. Later in the session I hope to extend an invitation to more parents to see our school at work.

While it is always pleasing to celebrate the achievements of our pupils or to acknowledge the improvements being made to the school be re-assured that our minds are focused on the year ahead. I wish your child every success this year.

Finally, thank you for the very positive response to our appeal about uniform. Your continued support is much appreciated and will help us to maintain this high standard throughout the session.

Philip Black
Rector

Scottish Science Baccalaureate

This year sees the Science department take the lead in the inaugural awards of the Scottish Science Baccalaureate. This involves marrying success in Highers and Advanced Highers to interdisciplinary projects. This year's entrants are studying swine flu, medical projects as well as sustainable engineering and space-related topics.

Award of School Colours

Congratulations to the following pupils who have been awarded colours:

David Anderson	Lorna Archer	Jessica Bennett	Finlay Dick
Jonathan Failes	Samantha Hardie	Eilidh Johnston	Sarah Kelly
Ben Kerridge	Ben Leitch	Catriona McBride	Magnus More
Darren Mutch	Iain Patrick	Rachel Potter	Emma Pritchard
Vicki Robertson	Kirsty Simpson	Oliver Twentyman	Calum Whytock
Lois Wilkinson	Matthew Wilkinson	Calum Winter	Anna Work

The Colours System recognises achievement in and service to the school entitling pupils to wear blazers and braid.

Colours are awarded for outstanding school achievement in the following areas:

Curricular Achievement
 Artistic and Creative Achievement
 Sporting Achievement
 Service to the School
 School Service in the Community



Last session ended on a high note for the Faculty of Performing Arts, with a successful production in June of 'New School Musical', directed by Mr James Kidd. The S3 cast were outstanding in their two performances – one for our new S1s and also an evening performance for friends and family.

A large group of senior pupils also had a fantastic time on the June bank holiday weekend trip to London. This popular outing is fast becoming a fixture on our calendar, and Mr James Kidd and Miss Jillian Spence have already started planning for next June. Anyone in S4/5/6 who is interested in going, should look out for the information letter that will be issued soon.

We have also been taking bookings for evening theatre visits this term for senior pupils: *The House of Bernarda Alba* and *The Cherry Orchard*, and a party of music pupils will be going to hear the RSNO play in Perth. The experience of seeing and hearing professional performance is a vital part of course work, as well as providing memorable cultural experiences. Teachers give freely of their time to organise and run these outings, and we thank parents and carers for their support in collecting pupils on their return to school.

In August we welcomed a new Drama teacher to the Faculty. Mrs Kirsty Simcock has joined us for her first year in the teaching profession. We wish her well in her future career and are sure she will have a great experience working with our excellent pupils at Bell Baxter. The month also saw us straight back into rehearsals for concerts and productions.

In Music, Bell Baxter High School musicians have represented the school as part of the Fife Youth Orchestra, the Fife Youth String Orchestra, the Fife Youth Percussion Ensemble and the Fife Youth Concert Band. Performing as far away as Edinburgh and Glasgow, these orchestras give young musicians an excellent opportunity to develop their talents by playing in an environment that brings together the best young musical talents in the area.

Auditions are held throughout September for new members of the different Fife orchestras and bands, and new members are always welcome from young musicians whether or not you receive tuition in school. Anyone interested can contact any music teacher.

We also have a number of music groups that rehearse in school. Whether your taste is rock bands, samba, choir, jazz, wind section, strings, etc, etc, there is something for everyone. Anyone who would like to join should check with any music teacher to see what is available.

In Drama, 30 S4 and S5 Bell Baxter pupils are preparing for their workshop at The Byre Theatre, St Andrews, run by the National Youth Theatre of Great Britain. This will be followed by the Bell Baxter production of *A Midsummer Night's Dream* at The Byre on Wednesday, 7th October.

We are performing the specially abridged production under the auspices of the Schools' Shakespeare Festival.

The UK wide festival aims to introduce young people to Shakespeare in performance, and on the 7th October, audiences will have the opportunity to see young people from four schools in Fife each perform one abridged version of a different play.

The timescale to get the production ready is extremely challenging, and as I rush to yet another rehearsal I find myself thinking of Puck's famous line from the play, "O lord what fools these mortals be!". Fortunately the cast are rising to the challenge and, with help from other teachers across the school, I am sure we will be ready on the day, and hopefully we will be performing in front of a large and supportive audience of Bell Baxter parents and friends.

Tickets for the evening are on sale exclusively through The Byre box office, in person, online or by phone, and prices are £7.50 (concessions £5.50).



The show starts at 7:30pm. Our photograph shows Claudia Craig as Helena and Melanie Orr as Hermia rehearsing the choreography for their fight.

I hope we will also meet parents and carers as part of audiences for the different Standard Grade, Intermediate, Higher and Advanced Higher Drama productions that will take place from the end of September to mid-November.

Pupils in each class will have the chance to invite friends and family to see their work, and we are always most grateful to you for giving up your time to come and support the young people. Performing in front of others can be a nerve wracking experience, and we see what a difference it makes to the young people when they know they have someone in the audience who is supportive and caring.

Finally, another date for your diary is this year's Christmas show, which will be Pinocchio. Written by Mr Richard Robb, the show will be held over two evenings on the 8th and 9th December – just the right time to start getting into the Christmas spirit! It is sure to sell out fast, so watch out for tickets when they go on sale after half term.

Eco Designs

S2 pupils will, this term, be assisting the eco group with plans for a part of the school grounds being developed into a garden for use by pupils and classes.

Pupils will be putting forward designs for this area and producing scale drawings of their plans.

The eco group hope to be able to take good ideas and suggestions on board and, where possible, use some of these ideas in the final plans for the layout of the garden.

We are hoping that the best drawers will produce a large scale plan of the finalised garden that can be displayed in the school.

Do you know why...

...the school is called Bell Baxter and not Cupar High School? Hopefully by now all our pupils know the answer to this question.

Check your child's Diary Planner for a short history of the school.



As part of the schools Homecoming Scotland initiative Higher History pupils will be visiting two exhibitions in Edinburgh.

The first of these is being displayed at The National Library of Scotland and focuses on 'The Original Export: Stories of Scottish Emigration', exploring the Scots who left their homeland in search of a new life abroad and how over the last 300 years Scots have forged new communities overseas. This exhibition runs to the 11th October 2009.

The second exhibition running at the Museum of Edinburgh is entitled 'Votes for Women', using images, original artefacts and first hand accounts it tells the story of the struggle to win the vote for women, from the mid-19th Century to 1928, when the fight for the right to vote was finally won on the same terms as men.

This exhibition runs to 9th January 2010.

Both the themes link directly to the Higher History syllabus and is hoped that pupils will find these both informative and interesting.

Nuffield Bursary

In June of this year I was awarded a Nuffield Bursary. The Nuffield Foundation enables 5th and 6th year pupils who are interested in pursuing a career in Science, Technology, Engineering or Maths to work alongside practising students, in establishments. My base was at Dundee University.

For the six weeks over the summer holidays I went to Dundee University where I did a project on "Holographic Beam Shaping". I had to show that holograms can be used to modify the shape of a laser beam into unusual patterns. In particular I showed that doughnut shaped beams, called Laguerre-Gaussian beams, can be produced with simple holograms. I also presented some preliminary data on a new type of beam being called an "accelerating" beam.

At the end of the project I had to write a ten-page paper on what I had done and produce a poster. This poster was displayed at a Celebration Event at the Royal College of Physicians in Edinburgh. The event offers students involved to display what they have achieved during their placements and to meet and discuss it with other students, supervisors teachers and guests. This year 97 students took part in the scheme throughout Scotland.

I was then presented with a certificate by Dr Alan Walker, Secretary of the Institute of Physics in Scotland.

I really enjoyed my time and would recommend anyone to apply for a Nuffield Bursary. My thanks to Mr McAlister and Mr Black for putting me forward.

Douglas Tyndall, 6th Year

Fairtrade News

The Fairtrade Group are getting ready for a Staff v Pupils Fairtrade Football Match to help celebrate the opening of the new Astroturf.

There will also be a 'Beat the Goalie' contest, featuring teachers dressed in banana suits!



The school has recently purchased new Fairtrade footballs which will be used for the football events, helping us to maintain our Fairtrade school status and also supporting rubber farmers and workers in countries such as Pakistan and India.

Eco Issues

This term the Eco Group are going to be busy planting in our school garden, starting with the meadow area which will be planted with lots of lovely wildflowers.

To coincide with National Tree Week, we will be planting a wildlife hedge around the perimeter of our garden to provide habitats, food and cover for a variety of species. The tubs at the front of the school are also being replanted with winter pansies and spring bulbs.

As mentioned earlier in the Newsletter, the Maths department are going to be getting involved with planning future developments for our garden.

S2 pupils will be working on a scale drawing project with a view to producing a garden plan to be displayed at the front of the school.

Bird feeding will start in November and continue through the winter with pupils helping to make fatballs and also recording the different birds visiting our school.

Finally, we have joined forces with Freuchie Primary School to develop a shared Eco Project, involving the local community too.

We aim to build a plastic bottle greenhouse in the grounds of Freuchie Primary School and for this we require 1500 two-litre plastic bottles - bottles are being collected at both Freuchie Primary and Bell Baxter.

We'll keep you posted on our progress!



Dates for Your Diaries

S1
Parents' Evening - 1 st & 6 th October '09 Report - w/b 10 th May '10

S2
Report - w/b 15 th February '10 Parents' Evenings - 17 th & 22 nd February '10

S3
Interim Report - w/b 16 th November '09 Parents' Evening - 17 th & 22 nd March '10 Assessment - 26 th - 30 th April '10 Reports - w/b 24 th May '10

Parent Council Meetings
Thursday 8 th October '09 Tuesday 3 rd November '09 Thursday 3 rd December '09 Wednesday 13 th January '10 Tuesday 24 th February '10 Thursday 29 th April '10 Wednesday 2 nd June '10

S4
Interim Report - w/b 5 th October '09 Parents' Evenings - 5 th & 10 th November '09 Prelims - 23 rd November - 4 th December '09 Report - w/b 25 th January '10 Course Counselling - 8 th March '10

S5/6
Interim Report - w/b 2 nd November '09 Parents' Evening - 7 th December '09 Prelims - 28 th January to 9 th February '10 Report - w/b 9 th March '10 Course Counselling - 15 th March '10

AWARE
w/b 5 th October '09 w/b 2 nd November '09
Newsletter
Issue 1 - w/b 21 st September '09 Issue 2 - w/b 16 th November '09 Issue 3 - w/b 15 th March '10 Issue 4 - w/b 24 th May '10

Colours Ceremony
Friday 23 rd April '10

Awards Ceremony
Thursday 1 st July '10

Spring Concert
Wed 31 st March '10

Closure Days
Friday 13 th Nov '09 Monday 4 th January '10 Wed 10 th February '10 Tuesday 8 th June '10

Christmas Dances
S1 - Thurs 10 th December '09 S2 - Wed 16 th December '09 S3/S4 - Mon 14 th December '09 S5/S6 - Thurs 18 th December '09

ICT & Enterprise

September has been a busy month for the Faculty.

At the start of the month we engaged in a pilot project with pupils from Dunbog Primary School – P3-P7. The pupils came up to Bell Baxter to take advantage of the facilities in the Faculty and thereby increase their confidence when using ICT and in particular spreadsheet packages. The visit was arranged by Ms Manders, Faculty Leader and the event was run by Mr Muir with the help of Ms McQuade and Mrs Bain.



The event was a huge success and was extremely enjoyable for all those who participated. Mr Kennedy, PT Computing also helped out and decided to make a small movie clip of the event so that the pupils from Dunbog could refer to the work they had undertaken when back at their own school.



Also over the past few weeks the faculty of ICT and Enterprise have been busy running a CPD course for primary colleagues.

Last week we were delighted to welcome back Paul Wilkinson, a former pupil of Bell Baxter, into the Computing Department where he inspired the Higher Computing sections with his own experiences at Cambridge University where he successfully gained a double first Degree in Computing Science.

Our Faculty website continues to be updated and provides some interesting insights into the work above and other aspects of our Faculty.

Congratulations.....

....to Ben Kerridge, S6, on his outstanding achievement of gaining a place on the Scottish Space School visit to NASA's Johnson Space Center in Houston, Texas.

From hundreds of applicants, Ben progressed through a week-long series of activities to progress to a group of 30 who experienced a range of long, difficult interviews and group activities to make the final 10.

Ben visits NASA in November and his itinerary includes a rocket launch, a tour of the space suit design facility and a special screening of Apollo 13 in mission control hosted by one of the flight engineers from that mission.

Ben will also attend an event with Alex Salmond and has been invited to appear on STV.



Attention all Parents & Carers!

Absences

Our continuing thanks for your telephone calls and correspondence which keeps us up-to-date with reasons for absence from school.

I would like to confirm that **any** absence from school requires a parent/carer note on the child's return. This is over and above the telephone call you may have already made to us.

Please address any absence note to your child's Registration teacher.



First Aid

Mrs Calderwood, our First Aider, continues to be very busy.

Parents/Carers are responsible for keeping First Aid up-to-date with any medical conditions/complaints which require support in school.

From time to time, pupils are returning to school injured following an accident, and may require special arrangements, such as access to the lifts, etc.

Parents/Carers are asked to contact us in advance to discuss their child's return to school.

It is parents' responsibility to ensure that any emergency medication required for their child is kept in the first aid and is within expiry dates.

If your child has not already updated emergency medication please do so as soon as possible. Please keep a record of expiry dates and replace as and when required.

Medication may be stored in First Aid over the holiday periods except for the summer break where it is required to be taken home on the pupil's last day. Any medication not collected will be disposed of by the local pharmacy.

School Office



MyFife

Full payment (£5) for a replacement card is required before a temporary card will be issued.

Temporary cards that are lost or wilfully damaged will also incur a £5 replacement charge.

Lost Property

A new lost property storage bin will be in place before the end of term. All non-valuable items of lost property will be here. Pupils will be asked to check this for any lost items.

The office staff would like to highlight the amount of lost property they receive each week. Parents are asked to encourage their son/daughter to check with the school office for any items they have lost.

Office staff make every effort to return items that are clearly identified with the child's name.

All valuable items will be logged and held by the school office.

Lost property is kept within the school for two months, at the end of this time valuable items are handed to Cupar Police Station and all other items are disposed of.

Office Opening Hours

The school office is open daily from 8:30 am to 4:40 pm throughout the term. An out-of-hours answering service is available for all calls to the school.

During holidays the school office is open 09:00am to 4:00pm daily (except Fife Council Holidays).

S1 Class Photographs

S1 Class Photographs are now on display in school. Photos are £9.00. To place an order please put £9.00 in an envelope and clearly mark 'S1 Photos' and your child's name and class. This envelope should be handed directly to the school office.